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ABSTRACT

Human communication research has identified and tested numerous aspects of interpersonal transactions, but at present there exists no empirically verifiable data as to how people end these transactions. This study is concerned with the rhetoric of goodbye--determining and assessing the peculiar behaviors, both verbal and non-verbal, with which interpersonal transactions are terminated. Through controlled observation and laboratory testing, the authors sought answers to the questions: (1) What specific verbal and non-verbal behaviors are associated with the termination of communicative exchanges? and (2) Do these termination behaviors vary according to the situational and relational constraints that bind two communicators? The results are interpreted suggesting the existence of certain normative characteristics to termination behaviors and also identify what seem to be the unique communicative functions of leave-taking. (Author/LG)

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# THE RHETORIC OF GOODBYE: VERBAL AND NONVERBAL CORRELATES OF HUMAN LEAVE-TAKING

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An inspection of research on human communication seems to show a common human failing---overlooking the obvious. While numerous aspects of interpersonal transactions have been scrutinized, the peculiar behaviors associated with how these transactions are terminated have been largely neglected by behavioral researchers. Perhaps we have not investigated how we end our conversations because the question is not worth asking. After all, leave-taking may seem to be mundane and ordinary, just a speck in the eye of the total process of human communication. The research to be reported here, however, suggests that this "speck" may eventually tell us a good deal about the larger organism of human interaction with which it is associated, since unique and terribly human interpersonal forces are unleashed when people say goodbye to one another.

It is not that we are unaware of the peculiar demands placed upon us by leave-taking. All of us, for example, have had the experience of "trying to get rid of" the person who interminably prolongs conversations. And who among us has not rapidly dictated a letter only to spend an inordinate amount of time pondering over the proper wording of the complimentary close---cordially, sincerely, respectfully, etc.? While scholarly research has sanctimoniously turned its back on conversational closings, the rest of the world seems to take its leave-taking seriously. Consider, for example, actual cases of busy executives who install elaborate buzzer systems in order to cope with the anticipated problems of leave-taking. Instead of using the verbal and nonverbal cues available to him as a human, Mr. A relies on technology. When finally he has tired of his conversation with Mr. B, Mr. A activates the hidden buzzer under his desk which then prompts his secretary in the outer office to phone her

boss. Ostensibly, Mr. A then has the freedom to report: "We'll have to take up this matter at another time, Mr. B--very important long distance phone call here."

## REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Despite the richness of these anecdotal remarks, more scholarly investigations of leave-taking are few and far between. Except for some casual remarks by Eric Berne, Erving Goffman, and other members of the "interpersonal underground," we are left with little insight into the latter stages of human transactions. A few hints have been offered about leave-taking, perhaps the most pregnant being Berne's contention that leave-taking is a ritual; that is, "a stereotyped series of simple complementary transactions programmed by external social forces."[1] In other words, leave-taking appears to have: (1) certain normative characteristics as well as (2) a number of specialized communicative functions. Let us briefly look at each of these theoretical propositions before considering the more systematic observations of leave-taking made by these researchers.

### The Normative Nature of Leave-Taking

From what can be derived from the rather fragile literature, leave-taking appears to be norm-bound. As Berne says, "an informal ritual, such as leave-taking, may be subject to considerable local variations in details, but the basic form remains the same."[2] Sadly, Berne does not detail what those "local variations" might entail or what characterizes the "basic form." As we will see later in this report, there does indeed appear to be a basic form to leave-taking, although that form really encompasses a wide range of actual and potential behaviors.[3]

It is probably this normative characteristic of leave-taking that John Keltner hints at when giving advice to student interviewers. He asserts, for instance, that interviews often have "a natural ending, which is determined by time, by the nature of the matter being discussed, or by the inclination of the parties."[4] He goes on to say that the effective interviewer "anticipates the coming end of the interview and begins to show terminal actions such as putting notes together and putting papers away."[5] While many of us have experienced the "natural ending" that Keltner speaks of and while all of us at one time or another have been able to "anticipate" when leave-taking should be initiated, it remains to be seen how we are able to make such perceptions or which features of leave-taking provide us with such cues.

If leave-taking has certain normative structures associated with it, one might conclude that violation of these norms will have definite consequences for the perceived efficacy of the leaving behavior. On some occasions these violations may be seen as constituting "unsatisfactory" leave-taking; in other contexts, the humor associated with such norm violations may only serve to strengthen the communication of a "satisfactory" relationship. Goffman uses the following as a potential norm violation: "A: 'Goodbye, it was nice seeing you.' B: 'Goodbye, it wasn't.'"[6]

As with most social norms, there are some communicators who seem to be extremely sensitive to the "acceptability" of certain leave-taking behaviors;[7] still others of us conduct our daily affairs seemingly "aware" of these norms but unable to specify why leave-taking is acceptable or unacceptable. In other words, we seem to know, but we don't know how we know

Goffman provides another example of the consequences faced by those who would violate the norms of leave-taking. In commenting upon the traditional farewell party (a rather dramatic form of leave-taking), Goffman remarks about what he calls "failed departures." A failed departure is exemplified when the farewell party's guest of honor finds it necessary to return briefly to the office the day after having been feted by his co-workers. Upon seeing him again, the office staff probably views the previous day's farewells as "improperly profuse for what has turned out to be a short absence." As Goffman says, "Something has been 'worked through' which now must be, but cannot be, worked through again."[8] In Berne's terms, the guest of honor has by this time "used up the strokes" allotted him by his comrades. Thus, although our everyday experiences continue to document the fact that taking leave is largely normative, research has not yet detailed these "regularities" nor has it delimited the normative parameters surrounding leave-taking.[9] Later in this essay, we hope to remedy some of these deficiencies.

## The Apparent Functions of Leave-Taking

Any discussion of the functions of leave-taking must consider the termination phase as still very much a part of the total transaction--not a separate entity or a sterile cluster of behaviors. Therefore, the functions of leave-taking are, at least as seen from the extant literature on the subject, similar in kind to the functions of all communicative activity.

### Signalling Inaccessibility

Goffman is obviously well aware of the interrelationships of the components found in a given communicative transaction when he discusses

one of the functions of leave-taking--that of signalling degree of accessibility. Commenting upon the relationships between greetings and farewells, (which he sees as the "brackets" or "punctuation marks" around conversations) Goffman suggests that "Greetings mark a transition to increased access and farewells to a state of decreased access."[10] Perhaps this anticipation of lack of access is one of the factors that contributes to some of the difficulty that many of us have experienced in taking leave. As will be seen later in this report, many of the behaviors associated with leave-taking are attempts to say, "Yes, communicative access will be denied us for awhile, but you should not perceive my leave-taking as threatening the end of our relationship." As Goffman observes, farewell parties bring this aspect of decreased accessibility to a head since the entire interaction is based upon the anticipated lack of access.

In like manner, Albert Mehrabian sees the ways in which a leave-taker copes with the prospect of future inaccessibility as being a good indicator of his "desire for immediacy" with his host.

> In more or less formal situations, social amenities sometimes make it more difficult to interpret nonverbal messages. In most unstructured situations, postponement of the actual moment of parting probably does signal genuine reluctance, whereas abrupt departure does indicate willingness to decrease the immediacy. The amenities dictate that guests in a home exhibit positive enjoyment of the hospitality and that the hosts exhibit equally positive delight in the company of guests in the home. The guest who says he must go, then stays on, may be genuinely reluctant to lessen the immediacy of contact with liked people; however, he may be reluctant only because his host might interpret early departure as an expression of displeasure with hospitality. A host who prolongs farewells may be genuinely reluctant to end the social encounter, or he may be (dishonestly) sending the "proper" signals dictated by the amenities.[11]

Naturally, there will be some variations in verbal and nonverbal behaviors depending on the length of time likely to separate the two parties--i.e., whether future access for communication will be "immediate"

or "long-term". Goffman notes that terms such as "farewell" (currently used primarily in written communication) and even "goodbye" itself express a finality most appropriate to situations in which the persons will be apart for an extended period. On the other hand, cocktail parties provide a setting in which the probabilities of multiple encounters with the same person are greatly increased. Hence, one finds various abbreviated forms of leave-taking being used--e.g., "pardon me" or a "knowing" touch on the arm.

In special situations, the nature of the greeting may signal approximately how far off inaccessibility or termination may be. Interviewees who begin an interview by indicating: "I just thought I'd drop by for a short chat," (while looking at the clock on the wall) are essentially saying, "This will be a short interview; my time is limited; let's get down to business fast and you can expect I will leave fairly soon so watch for my cues."

Signalling Supportiveness

Even the most casual observation of human leave-taking will reveal that we usually close our interactions on a supportive note. The very fact that our leave-taking signals some amount of future inaccessibility probably mandates this supportiveness. Leave-taking appears to be that unit of interaction best suited to expressing our pleasure for having been in contact and to indicate our hopes for renewed contact in the future. Goffman hints at this supportive function of leave-taking when he states, "The goodbye brings the encounter to an unambiguous close, sums up the consequence of the encounter for the relationship, and bolsters the relationship for the anticipated period of no contact."[12] Naturally,

we efficient humans perform such functions in shorthand, often with an "it's been swell, let's do this again sometime."[13]

The anecdotal rule of thumb seems to be that if our interaction has been mutually reinforcing, our leave-taking will be supportive---in spades! Indeed, even when an interaction has been dull or distasteful, leave-taking is still often seen as a "special time" for being supportive to others. How else could we account for the careful, painstaking, and very human strategy-making present in Peg Bracken's advice to would-be bore-avoiders:

> Let us consider the Homesteaders, who set up housekeeping beside you on the sofa, at a social gathering. You can see yourself growing old with the Homesteaders, going hand in hand into the sunset years with the Homesteaders. Yet you wouldn't hurt their feelings for the world. . . .
>
> In this situation, a woman can do this: She can look stricken, clutch hopelessly at a shoulder strap, and murmur, "I'm so sorry---would you excuse me?" Now she must head for the bathroom or the bedroom, but at any rate she has lifted anchor.
>
> A man, too, can use the exclamation-and-mutter--possibly something about car lights or car keys. He must step outside then, but fresh air will taste good, and he can get lost coming back.
>
> Either sex, of course, can remember the imperative phone call, or hunt for a nonexistent place to set a glass down, or for cigarettes, or for a book in the bookcase in the next room, exactly the Homesteader's type. Or keep a sharp eye out for a replacement, and hail him cordially. If it is Charlie Snootful, already snockered, so much the better, for he won't see what's about to happen to him. Then all that is needed is a "Listen to this, Charlie---Homesteader, tell Charlie what you were just telling me. . . .[14]

Supportiveness in leave-taking often takes the form of an expressed desire to continue the interaction at a later date. After all, what could be more supportive than doing it all again? Whether or not we choose this strategy of "futurism," we are often quite careful about our leave-taking since, at face value at least, the termination of an interaction can be

seen as a compromise to the relationship. In his book, The Helping Interview, Benjamin sees the closing of a therapeutic interview as a particularly volatile time in the life of a therapist-client relationship and hence, a moment that calls for great supportiveness. Says Benjamin:

> Closing is especially important because what occurs during this last stage is likely to determine the interviewee's impression of the interview as a whole. We must make certain that we have given him full opportunity to express himself, or, alternatively, we must set a mutually convenient time for this purpose. We should leave enough time for closing so that we are not rushed, since this might create the impression that we are evicting the interviewee.[15]

Summarizing

There are, of course, more pragmatic functions to our leave-taking than simply signalling degree of inaccessability or supportiveness. When breaking off conversations, we often use the opportunity to recapitulate the substantive portion of the interaction.[16] The college professor summarizes what has been covered in that day's lecture. The goodnight kiss brings to mind the satisfactions of the evening. The last few moments of the counseling session are used to "process" that session's growth. These are the "tidying-up chores" of leave-taking.

Some of the chores invite stylized responses and hence letter-writing texts have built prescription upon prescription for "getting away" from your addressee--"cordially" for personal friends; "sincerely yours" for business acquaintances, "respectfully yours" for those higher up the corporate ladder; etc., etc.[17] Despite the inanities imbedded herein, a very pragmatic point rears its head--our leave-taking is usually seen as a kind of "interpersonal summary." During leave-taking, we often seem to operate on a "Law of Recency," as if the last thing we say to a person is the only thing he'll take away from the interaction.

Through what can be derived from introspection and anecdote, leave-taking, that little observed but potentially important ritual we engage in daily, is used: (1) to warn of future inaccessibility, (2) to reinforce relationships and to support future encounters, and (3) to summarize the substantive portions of the interaction. These hypotheses about function and our previous assertions about the normative structure of leave-taking, seem to be the only extant threads upon which a more systematic study of leave-taking can be based. With this evidence at hand, we launched the following investigation of leave-taking.

## A STUDY OF LEAVE-TAKING

Through systematic observation and laboratory testing, we sought answers to the following questions: (1) What specific verbal and nonverbal behaviors are associated with the termination of communicative exchanges? and (2) Do these verbal and nonverbal termination behaviors vary according to the situational and relational constraints that bind two communicators? (More specifically, what effects, if any, do status and acquaintance have on leave-taking behavior in an interview situation?)[18]

### Design and Procedures

The following research design was used to determine the influence of status and acquaintance on human leave-taking:

| Sex | Status | | Acquaintance | N |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| ALL MALE PAIRS | DIFFERENT | Hi (Interviewee)<br>Lo (Interviewer) | Hi | 20 |
| | | Hi (E)<br>Lo (R) | Lo | 20 |
| | SAME | Lo (E)<br>Lo (R) | Hi | 20 |
| | | Lo (E)<br>Lo (R) | Lo | 20 |

Status differences were obtained by having student interviewers question a professor, while the same-status condition was composed of students interviewing each other. In order to structure the hi and lo acquaintance conditions, the two confederate interviewees (professor and student) were asked to provide a list of twenty student acquaintances (persons they knew well and felt comfortable talking to). Persons on these lists were then placed into the high acquaintance condition. Students unknown to the interviewees composed the low acquaintance condition.[19]

Subjects (interviewers) were asked to enter a room and conduct an information-gathering interview. They were told to get an "attitudinal reading" on the interviewee in the shortest amount of time possible. Specifically, the interviewer was instructed as follows:

> We are attempting to investigate how quickly an accurate impression of another's attitudes can be obtained. We would like you to talk to <u>(name)</u> and try to find out as many of his beliefs about student-teacher relations at Purdue as you can. As soon as you feel you understand and can predict his views on this subject, end the interview. When the interview is completed and you have left the room, you will be asked to fill out a form listing your perceptions of the interviewee. You will have the possibility of making money in this experiment depending on the accuracy of your impressions of the interviewee. We will also be timing you. The longer it takes you to complete your interview, the less money you will make. Under no circumstances should you go over five minutes since no money can be paid for interviews lasting more than five minutes. When your five minutes is up a signal light will go on behind the interviewee. The person you'll be talking to doesn't know anything about the monetary aspects of this experiment. We will be videotaping the interview. <u>Remember, the quicker you are, and the more accurate you are, the more money you make</u>. Any questions?

After reading the instructions, the subject was brought into the laboratory room and introduced to the interviewee (professor or student) in the following manner:

(Interviewee's name),[20] this is (Interviewer's name) who would like to ask you a few questions about student-teacher relations at Purdue. The interview shouldn't last long. Do you have any questions?

The interviewee was privately instructed to answer the questions asked, but not, under any circumstances, to give termination cues himself. All subjects were videotaped. Following the interview, subjects completed an attitudinal profile of the interviewee and were paid for their efforts.

## Analytical Procedures

### Verbal Leave-Taking Category System

Analysis of the verbal cues occurring during leave-taking was accomplished by means of a sign category analysis system. Essentially, this method permits a given statement to be classified in as many concept categories as are appropriate to that statement. For example, the phrase, "John, the college student" could be seen as having at least three "signs" since the phrase could be placed simultaneously into such categories as "male," "young adult," and "college student." The verbal category system developed for this study, therefore, permitted a good deal of conceptual flexibility since non-orthogonal categories were used; the method seems defensible since it accounts for the "dynamics" or "multi-meaningness" of a given verbal statement.

For each interview, the S's concluding remarks were transcribed and subjected to a statement-by-statement content analysis. The context unit was defined as those statements made by the S during the 45 seconds preceding his rising from a seated position and included all statements made while leaving the room.

Because oral discourse does not present itself in sentence or paragraph form, some care was exercised in defining "statements"--the recording units.

A statement was designated as: "any sequence of verbalizations made by an S that is not interrupted by his dyad partner." The fact that the recording units were, naturally, of uneven length, did not appear to be a contaminating factor.

From our review of the anecdotal literature, from the surveys and controlled observations,[21] and from a pilot project conducted by these researchers, a number of verbal "sign categories" were suggested for use in the content analysis of leave-taking. The categories were:

(1) Professional Inquiry--Any statement made by an S which directly sought a response from the dyad partner and which concerned itself with that partner's professional task role. (e.g., "How long have you been majoring in sociology?")

(2) Personal Inquiry--Any statement made by an S which directly sought a response from the dyad partner and which did not concern itself with that partner's professional task role. (e.g., "When will you be leaving for vacation?")

(3) Internal Legitimizing--Any declarative statement made by an S that sought to justify leave-taking by making reference to the S's own sense of having completed the conversation. (e.g., "Well, I think that just about covers it.")

(4) External Legitimizing--Any declarative statement made by an S that sought to justify leave-taking by making reference to persons or forces external to the S. (e.g., "I can see that students are waiting to talk to you, so I'll leave now.")

(5) Appreciation--Any declarative statement made by an S that served to express satisfaction or enjoyment at having participated in the conversation. (e.g., "Really enjoyed talking to you, Chris.")

(6) Welfare Concern--Any declarative statement made by an S that expressed hope for the continued well-being of the dyad partner. (e.g., "Now take it easy.")

(7) Continuance--Any declarative statement made by an S that expressed a desire to interact with the dyad partner again in the future. (e.g., "See you later.")

(8) Filling--Any declarative statement (oftentimes a humorous aside) made by an S that was irrelevant to the main substantive topic discussed in the interaction. (e.g., "Ya know, it seems like I've seen you somewhere on campus before.")

(9) Reference to Other--Any word or phrase made by an S which makes reference-by-name to the dyad partner. (e.g., "Gee, Eric, it's been great talking to you.")

(10) Tentativeness--Usually short words or phrases made by an S which suggested uncertainty or multi-ordinality. (Key words: think, guess, should, about, almost, etc.)

(11) Reinforcement--Usually short words or phrases made by an S that apparently served to give outright or tacit agreement to remarks previously made by the dyad partner. (Key words: yeah, right, uh-huh, sure, o.k., etc.)

(12) Buffing--Usually short words or phrases made by an S that served to "bridge" thoughts or change the topic under discussion. (Key words: uh, er, well, etc.)

(13) Terminating--Usually short words or phrases made by an S that served to signal the conclusion of the interaction. (Key words: goodbye, so long, etc.)

(14) Superlatives--Usually short words or phrases made by an S which served to emphasize or magnify a verbal statement. (Key words: really, very much, a lot, etc.)

Four content analysts, all of whom were experienced in communication research, went through a training session in order to become familiar with the operational definitions of the content categories. Upon completing the training session, all four coders independently content analyzed the verbal transcriptions, indicating whether or not each of the above "signs" were present in a given statement and, if present, whether the signs occurred 1, 2, 3, or 4 or more times. An inter-coder reliability coefficient of .96 (significant at the .01 level) was obtained from these ratings. The coding sheet used had the advantage of displaying both single and co-occurrences of the verbal signs in each statement.

Nonverbal Leave-Taking Category System

Because of the complexity and individual idiosyncracies associated with nonverbal behavior, an analysis system for nonverbal leave-taking was especially constructed for this study. Again, drawing from anecdotal and

experiential sources,[22] we attempted to base our coding system on those unique nonverbal machinations that one expects from persons attempting to terminate conversations.

For each interview, analysis of nonverbal cues began forty-five seconds prior to the subject's rising from a seated position and continued until the subject had left the interviewing room. Because all of the interviews were videotaped, it was possible to stop the playback tape at intervals and to code in fifteen second segments. Thus, four ratings of nonverbal behavior were made for each S, three focusing on his activities prior to his rising from his seat and the fourth assessing the behaviors he engaged in while removing himself from the room.

While in all cases the overall context unit used for analysis was forty-five (plus) seconds of dyadic interaction, methods of coding specific behaviors varied. Three categories employed a durational analysis (the specific behavior was coded as either not occurring at all or as perseverating for 1-4 seconds, 5-9 seconds, 10-14 seconds, or for the entire fifteen seconds), while in the remaining nine categories coders focused on simple frequency of occurrence (the specific behavior was either not exhibited or engaged in once, twice, three times, or four or more times). These differences in coding were necessitated by the differences in the nature of the nonverbal phenomena being observed.

It should be remembered that many of the nonverbal categories presented here are unique to the type of communicative situation analyzed in this study--all subjects sat facing their dyad partners, the only exit was to the S's left, and a rather "formal" mood resulted from the task-oriented nature of the videotaped interview. The nonverbal categories used in analysis and their operational definitions follow:

ANALYSIS BY TIME

(1) Left Positioning--Included the amount of time an S was "tending toward" the direction of his proposed exit. An instance of left positioning was recorded each time the S's legs and/or feet were pointing toward the door and away from his interviewee.

(2) Forward Leaning--Included the amount of time an S leaned toward his dyad partner within a given coding segment. When in a forward leaning position, a S's trunk was at a forty-five degree angle (minimum).

(3) Hand Leveraging--Included the amount of time a S's hands were placed on his knees or legs (or on the chair itself) in such a way that, by straightening his arms, he could assist himself in rising from the chair.

ANALYSIS BY OCCURRENCE

(1) Explosive Hand Contact---A rapid striking movement in which the hand(s) came in contact with either another part of the body (usually the thighs) or a foreign object (e.g., school books)--usually a slapping or striking motion.

(2) Sweeping Hand Movement--An elongated, usually lateral, movement of the hands and arms in which the hands moved outside of the spatial perimeter of the upper torso--oftentimes a waving or sweeping motion.

(3) Handshake--Only included the familiar grasp, not "false starts."

(4) Major Leg Movement--Any movement of the legs which resulted in a significant change in posture--included crossing, uncrossing, significant movement of legs from left to right, etc.

(5) Explosive Foot Contact---A rapid striking movement in which the foot (or feet) came into contact with the floor--as if to catapult.

(6) Breaking of Eye Contact--Included those perceptible motions in which the S looked away from the face area of his dyad partner. Normal, rapid eye blinks were not counted, but each time the S looked up, down, to the right, or to the left, one occurrence of "breaking" was coded. Usually, this included a distinct head movement.

(7) Smiling--Did not include hard-to-distinguish "grins."

(8) Major Nodding Movement--Each forward-and-back motion of the head was coded as one MNM. Excluded were side-to-side head movements and rapid, almost imperceptible nodding behavior which would not lend themselves to clear-cut visual discriminations.

(9) Major Trunk Movement--Any trunk motion that necessitated a change in posture. Such a movement took the form of shifting back and forth, leaning back, straightening up, standing up, etc. Not included were movements that terminated in a forward leaning position.

While the above definitions may appear to be pretentious, if not pedantic, such operational definitions were crucial to understanding the many things a body can "say" while in motion. While engaged in this research, we found that often-observed but rarely studied nonverbal events (such as trunk movement) are really a series of simultaneously occurring "mini-events," the elements of which must be dissected and examined if the researcher is to perceive the "meanings" contained therein.

Four experienced coders underwent a series of training sessions in order to understand and operationalize the nonverbal category system. Having completed the training session (and a number of "trial runs"), the coders watched the videotaped replays of all eighty interviews three times each--once for coding the head, once for posture and hands, and once for legs. The tapes were stopped at fifteen second intervals and the coders were given time to make their independent ratings. Each coder, then, completed four ratings for each subject in each category. Despite the potential ambiguities present in the nonverbal categories described above, intercoder reliability was .86 (significant at the .01 level).[23]

## Data Analysis

Data analysis involved five steps: (1) all observations of occurrence and duration were converted to numbers so that means and standard deviations could be determined; (2) verbal and nonverbal behaviors were rank ordered in terms of frequency and/or duration of occurrence; (3) nonverbal behaviors were analyzed for frequency of occurrence across time; (4) verbal behaviors

were analyzed for frequency of co-occurrence, (5) Wilson's non-parametric two-way analysis of variance[24] was run on the data to determine the effects of status and acquaintance on leave-taking behavior.

## Results

### Overall Rank Orders. Verbal and Nonverbal

Table 1 presents the answer to our first, and perhaps most basic, question: what are the most frequently occurring verbal and nonverbal behaviors used in terminating conversations? Table 1 represents an overall rank ordering of these behaviors and ignores potential variations in the status and acquaintance conditions. This table is especially meaningful since an inspection of the data revealed nonsignificant changes in ranks (for both verbal and nonverbal variables) as a result of the status and acquaintance conditions. This was true for both main effects and interaction effects.

INSERT TABLE 1 HERE

### Temporal Results for Nonverbal

The rankings found in Table 1 indicate total frequency but do not reveal temporal or co-occurrence phenomena. In order to determine the frequency of occurrence for nonverbal behaviors across time, each variable was rank ordered for each of the fifteen second time periods studied. These results are shown in Table 2.

INSERT TABLE 2 HERE

Table 2 shows definite changes in rank for some variables across time, but it does not make graphic the dramatic forces operating in the third time period (15 seconds prior to standing). Figure 1 illustrates how each

variable, regardless of its overall frequency of occurrence in relation to other variables, peaks during this third time period. The two obvious exceptions are handshakes and left positioning which peaked during period four (after rising, but prior to actual exiting).

INSERT FIGURE 1 HERE

Verbal Co-occurrences

As mentioned previously, a separate analysis of verbal co-occurrences was also made, since any one verbal statement could be composed of several sign categories. (For example, the statement, "Yeah, well . . . thanks for your time" would be classified as Reinforcement/Buffing/Appreciation.) Nearly half of the categories studied co-occurred more often than they occurred alone,[25] but Table 3 shows only the most frequent co-occurrences.

INSERT TABLE 3 HERE

Status and Acquaintance

The second major question of this study concerned the possible influence of status and acquaintance on leave-taking. A two way analysis of variance of the nonverbal variables showed no significant differences for either main or interaction effects of status and acquaintance factors. Although no interaction effects were found among the verbal phenomena, four statistically significant (.05) differences were revealed for the main effects of status and acquaintance. These differences included:

1. Reinforcement was significantly greater for acquainted dyads than for non-acquainted ones.
2. Reinforcement was significantly greater for dyads differing in status than those in which the status was equal.
3. Buffing was significantly greater for dyads differing in status than for those in which the status was the same.
4. Professional Inquiry was significantly greater for same status pairs than for different status pairs.

## Discussion

From a theoretical perspective, the results of our study suggest several important factors seemingly omnipresent in the rhetoric of goodbye. Some of the data suggest the existence of leave-taking norms, while other aspects of our data allow us to be more precise in our speculations about the communicative functions of leave-taking.

### Apparent Norms of Leave-taking

Although "statistically significant differences" are much revered among empiricists, there are occasions when the lack of such significance is equally valuable and suggestive for illuminating communicative transactions. The results of this study may provide just such "teasing insight."

Very little variation in verbal and nonverbal behavior was perceived in leave-taking when partners were experimentally paired, even though some of these pairs were dissimilar with respect to status and acquaintance. The absence of significantly different behaviors in these dyads (even in the face of such potent factors as status and acquaintance) may suggest that behavioral regularity attends leave-taking. Certainly this highly tentative conclusion does not exclude the possibility that other situational[27] and personality variables may give rise to aspects of leave-taking not observed in this study nor does it imply that the mediating factors of status and acquaintance would have no effect on leave-taking in other experimental settings. Our findings do suggest, however, the existence of leave-taking norms (consistent patterns of behavior) deemed "proper" for guiding, controlling, or regulating actions in relatively task-oriented communicative situations. Thus,

the verbal and nonverbal findings presented in Table 1 may be seen as a set of normative patterns---a list of leave-taking "dos" and "don'ts"--- for a somewhat "formal" interview.

For this study, "proper" leave-taking seems to consist primarily of a combination of Reinforcement, Professional Inquiry, Buffing, and Appreciation on the verbal level and the non-verbalisms of Breaking Eye Contact, Left Positioning, Forward Lean, and Head Nodding. The only significant differences found between conditions of status and acquaintance pertained to three of the four verbal categories aforementioned. When status differences obtain in communication, apparently significantly more Reinforcement and Buffing is demanded of the communicative partner of lower status. Such behavior is understandable when one considers that Reinforcement cues can be seen as supportive to the relationship and that Buffing seems to act as a deference mechanism. Buffers may, of course, be used for purposes other than showing submissiveness, but in taking leave of high status persons Buffers may be the salve used to counteract a potential norm violation---that of taking the "exiting initiative" without having been "officially released" by the high status member of the dyad.

Although it seems reasonable that Professional Inquiry is an appropriate strategy for building rapport with high status persons, significantly more questions concerning professional task roles occurred when the interactants were of similar status than when different-status partners conversed. In the context of this experiment such unexpected behavior was probably motivated by a combination of two forces. First, to ask a person of higher status about their job may have been thought by the interviewers to be a social gaffe, an inappropriate intrusion. Secondly, high status persons often tend to become quite verbose when responding to questions

concerning their professional activities--such verbal carryings-on would not have allowed interviewers to make the most of their five-minute interview.

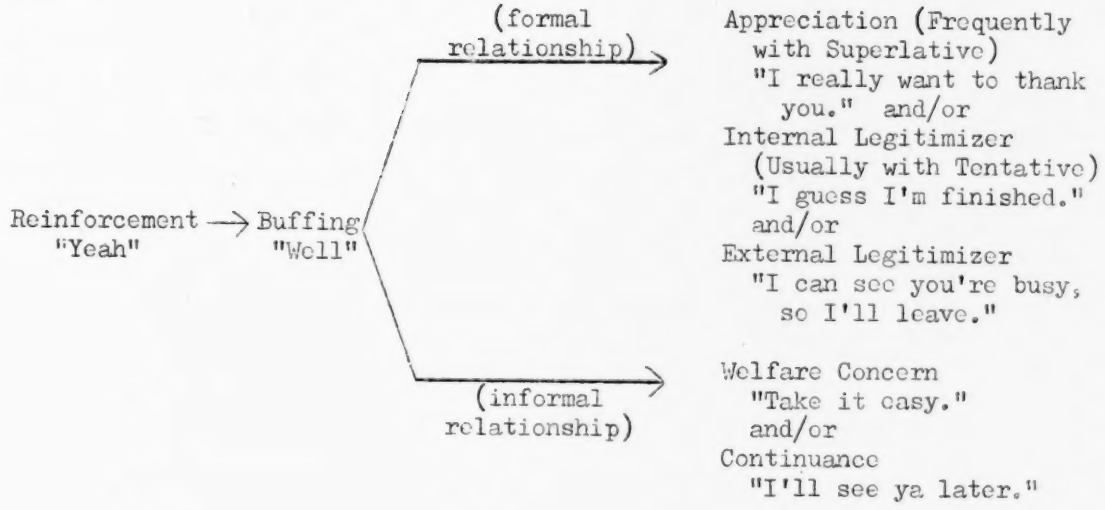
Reinforcement cues were found to be significantly greater in preponderance for acquainted than for non-acquainted pairs. One possible explanation of this finding is that there may be greater motivation for maintaining established friendships than for developing new ones. The plausability of this interpretation seems heightened when we consider that the "reinforcers" were under considerable time pressure to exit quickly and thus probably saw little value in dallying with newly made acquaintances.

The behaviors listed in Table 1 as occurring infrequently might be seen as "inappropriate" (i.e., non-normative) behaviors for use in a goal-directed interview. These leave-taking "don'ts" might be functions of the formality of the interviewing situation and the communicators' anticipated length of inaccessability. For instance, Terminators and Handshakes rarely occurred. While we might expect these behaviors to occur in formal situations,[28] such expressions of communicative finality would not be expected to occur when interactants would be apart for only a short time. This latter hypothesis seems reasonable when we consider that the possibility of subjects' seeing persons connected with this experiment in the confines of a university campus was sufficiently high as to negate "goodbyes" and Handshakes. Also, since the confederate (the interviewee) was prohibited from <u>initiating</u> leave-taking behaviors (such as handshakes), subjects might have been worried about making "false starts." Similarly, Welfare Concern, Continuance, and Explosive Hand Contact are frequently observed in everyday <u>informal</u> situations, but

apparently were not suited to the "businesslike" nature of these experimental interviews.

An analysis of the verbal co-occurrence data also suggests the existence of certain leave-taking rituals. For instance, it was found that Tentatives are most likely to be found in the presence of Internal Legitimizers (e.g., "I guess that's about it."). The Tentative, in this case, seems to soften the directness of "being finished." Literally, you "guess" you're finished and then it's up to your dyad partner to confirm or confound that expectation. In another vein, the frequent co-occurrence of Superlatives with Appreciation seems to serve the function of accenting cordiality--of making the appreciation more vivid.

We also found Reinforcement and Buffing to co-occur with some regularity. Since both types of behavior usually occurred at the beginnings of statements, they appear to "forewarn" the other that something else may be coming (like an Internal Legitimizer) and ask the receiver to "ready himself" for the exit cues to follow. So patterned were these co-occurrences that the existence of a "normative paradigm" for verbal leave-taking is suggested. The process shown below is obviously subject to numerous variations (e.g., "entrance" into the paradigm can occur at any point), but it does incorporate many of the <u>typical</u> patterns of verbal leave-taking observed in this study:




At any point in the process depicted above the receiver may anticipate the completion of the paradigm and, by "filling in the blanks," make further verbalization by the sender unnecessary--e.g., Bruce: "Yeah . . . well . . ." Bill: "All right, Bruce, I'll see ya later."

The timing of nonverbal behaviors perhaps reveals most graphically the normative aspects of leave-taking. Figure 1 clearly identifies the fifteen-second period prior to standing as the peak period of activity for all but two of the nonverbal behaviors. Further, almost all of these behaviors show a gradual increase in frequency of occurrence which "peaks" just prior to the subject's rising, and decreases rapidly after a standing position is assumed. In the light of such patterns, it is easy to see why we often become frustrated if we are not "released" after rising. Such an interpersonal denial means that we must go through the whole routine again!

## Primary Communicative Functions of Leave-Taking

The results of this study enable us to be more precise when estimating the communicative functions of leave-taking. Although our

review of the literature implied that summarizing is often part-and-parcel of leave-taking, we found no evidence of such a task being performed by the interviewers observed in this study. The act of summarizing the interaction may be a function which is specific to special contexts--when the substance is critical to the well-being of one or both parties (therapy) or when the talking burden is primarily on the shoulders of the sender (public speaking or letter-writing). The limited time available to the subjects for interviewing (coupled with a monetary motivation to leave the room quickly) may have prevented any summary behaviors from occurring in our experimental interviews. Subjects may also have felt that the summary function was being served by other aspects of leave-taking--e.g., appreciation gives support to the relationship, but may also be seen as summarizing the general "pleasantness" of the interaction.

The two major communicative functions of leave-taking seemingly suggested by the results of this study were: (1) signalling inaccessability, and (2) signalling support for the relationship. Some verbal and nonverbal behaviors appear to serve these functions directly while others seem to do so subtly. (The more direct the leave-taking cues, the greater the chance of clearly signalling one's intent to leave.)

As can be seen in Table 4 we feel that all observed behaviors signal inaccessability in some fashion; some leave-taking behaviors, however, appear to do "double-duty" by signalling both inaccessibility and supportiveness. For example, Reinforcement, Smiling, Superlatives, Welfare Concern, and Appreciation appear to forewarn the other of inaccessability rather obliquely but offer support for the relationship somewhat demonstratively. Reference to Other and Continuance seem to

do just the opposite. One very practical implication for communicators can be derived from Table 4. It is possible to take leave of someone without (either through the quantity or directness of the cues) giving clear indications of supportiveness. In such cases one may end the conversation while simultaneously terminating a potential friendship.

INSERT TABLE 4 HERE

All of the behavioral correlates of leave-taking seem to have the potential to indicate that parting will take place, possibly how soon, and for how long. (Both verbal and nonverbal behaviors appear to serve these functions equally well.) To signal inaccessability, a communicator may use subtle cues to alter the established speaking-listening pattern; thus, Nodding, Smiling, and Reinforcement may be viewed as behaviors which "politely" signal inattentiveness and lack of responsiveness on the part of the leaver. Even arguments are often terminated with these cues, not because the two parties agree, but because one party is tired of discussing the issue and wants to bring the exchange to a halt ("Yes, dear. Whatever you say, dear . . ."). Since other behaviors also signal both inaccessability and supportiveness, problems may arise. For example, it might be difficult to break Eye Contact in situations where one wants to communicate support, but also wants to leave. Hence, we notice lovers glancing back at each other while physically moving away.

Lack of access can, of course, be made vivid by explicit verbal cues and dramatic, accentuating nonverbal cues. The Explosive Foot and Hand Contacts are examples of behaviors which tend to increase the certainty of exiting, and in Goffman's terms, serve to "punctuate" the finality of the encounter.

Since leave-taking signals the end of things, we are often concerned with terminating our interactions on the "right note," that is, on a note of mutual regard. Table 4 lists fifteen behavior styles which appear to be designed to build, reinforce, or otherwise support the relationship so that the "negativity" of inaccessability is offset. When we combine these interpretations with the data presented in Table 1 (which indicate that Reinforcement was the verbal strategy chosen most often by the leave-takers in our study) we can get a graphic feeling of the great amount of supportiveness that attends exiting behavior.

Inspection of Table 4 also shows that a preponderance of what we have called supportive behaviors are verbal, which might be explained by remembering that the nonverbal code is less standardized and often perceived as being more subject to misinterpretation than are our verbalizations. Since the support function is such a critical element in leave-taking, the use of verbal statements may help to reduce any potential ambiguity as to the nature of the relationship. Even the four nonverbal behaviors we are hypothesizing as belonging in this support category have been independently studied and associated with such supportive acts as liking, warmth, approval, and affiliation.[29] Perhaps because we feel that the termination of an interaction may be perceived as a threat to terminate the relationship, we humans go through a veritable song-and-dance when taking leave of our fellows.[30]

Taking Leave of Leave-Taking

Throughout this paper we have been discussing leave-taking as it occurs at the ends of conversations. Sometimes, however, leave-taking cues may be given during the interaction. In some cases such cues may

be accidental--motivated by a perceived lack of discussable topics. Sensitive communicators will quickly try to neutralize such cues lest the other person respond by leaving. In other cases, leave-taking cues may be given during a conversation when one wants to change the topic or "get the floor" (e.g., "Yeah, right, o.k., . . . but . . ."). Such behaviors are often observed when we interact with verbose persons, where conversational "openings" are difficult to find.

Though minute and seemingly irrelevant on the surface, leave-taking behaviors do appear to be powerful interpersonal forces, even though so little is known about the potential direction and magnitude of these communicative cues. By now it should be clear that research into the "rhetoric of goodbye" may provide many important insights into human communicative transactions. Our development of a comprehensive coding system helped us, as it may help others, to discover how leave-taking cues permit novel insights to be made of the affective nature of an ongoing interpersonal relationship and how still other cues may prove to be colloquial predictors of future interpersonal contacts. Later research in the area may discover that the initiation and reception of leave-taking cues provides an offhand view of general interpersonal sensitivity. Perhaps the most important feature of research in this area is that it can give us unique insights into a relatively unexplored aspect of spoken interactions--the nature of communicative norms, those little-noticed, out highly potent interpersonal maneuvers, by which we humans structure and maintain our social contacts. In sum, to discover thematic aspects of the expressive and receptive components of leave-taking is to discover important information about the nature of interacting man.

FOOTNOTES

[1]Games People Play (New York: Grove Press, 1964), p. 36.

[2]Ibid.

[3]Certainly any discussion of leave-taking norms cannot ignore the highly influential etiquette books which function as a source for establishing some of these norms. For example: "on when to go--your exit cues are many. They range from clear-cut closing remarks, usually in the form of a 'thank you for coming in,' to a vacant and preoccupied stare. But in any case they should come from the interviewer. It should not be necessary for him to stand, abruptly; you should have been able to feel the goodbye in the air far enough in advance to gather up your gear, slide forward to the edge of your chair and launch into a thank-you speech of your own. Nor should it be necessary to ask that embarrassing question, 'Am I taking too much of your time?': if that thought crosses your mind, it's time to go." Esquire Etiquette (New York: Lippincott, 1953), p. 59.

[4]Interpersonal Speech Communication (Belmont, California: Wadsworth, 1970), p. 276. Our Italics.

[5]Ibid.

[6]Relations in Public (New York: Basic Books, 1971), p. 178.

[7]Goffman indicates that professional hucksters are quite aware of the norms of leave-taking and that they use these social rules to advantage. As he reports, "Pitchman and street stemmers . . . rely on the fact that the accosted person will be willing to agree to a purchase in order not to have to face being the sort of person who walks away from an encounter without being officially released." Behavior in Public Places (New York: The Free Press, 1963), p. 111.

[8]George Kaufman's "one-liner" in the following story aptly illustrates the feelings engendered by these failed departures. At the supposed completion of a movie, S. N. Behrman, the playwright, was given a farewell party on Saturday night which George Kaufman attended. Because of last minute changes in the film, it was necessary for Behrman to show up for work on Monday. Behrman reports his meeting with Kaufman as follows: "George Kaufman was walking in the opposite direction. He had said farewell to me on Saturday night. His face showed no surprise. 'Oh?' he said. 'Forgotten but not gone.'" Later when Behrman told this story to then President John F. Kennedy, Kennedy remarked: "Thank you very much for that line . . . it will come in very handy to me in the corridors of the White House." S. N. Behrman, "People in a Diary," The New Yorker (May 20, 1972), p. 79.

[9]When talking about the normative aspects of any communicative event, we must always keep in mind that norms, like the people that produce them, are culture-bound. Thus, we should not be surprised to find that in the sub-culture of young children, it is perfectly acceptable to terminate

interactions with: "It's time for you to go home now, Betsy. Goodbye." Equally "crude" by adult American standards might be the leave-taking ritual engaged in by the Andamanese which "consists in raising the hand of the other to the mouth and gently blowing on it, reciprocally." Cf. W. LaBarre, "Paralinguistics, Kinesics, and Cultural Anthropology," in T. A. Sebeok, A. S. Hayes, and M. C. Bateson (eds.) Approaches to Semiotics (The Hague: Mouton, 1964), p. 199.

[10]Relations in Public (New York: Basic Books, 1971), p. 79. There are, of course, important differences in psychological outlook between greetings and farewells. For instance, a highly demonstrative greeting may set high expectations for closeness and involvement during the interaction, yet similar exhuberance during leave-taking is offered with the knowledge that contact will soon be broken and that additional supportive behaviors will not be required. Another difference between greetings and farewells probably lies in the area of advanced preparation. While we can carefully "plan" our greetings in many cases, our leave-taking must be carried out in the light of the situational factors which have developed during the interaction. These impromptu demands, coupled with the importance of leave-taking in structuring future encounters, may be at the heart of any "felt difficulty" in leave-taking.

[11]Silent Messages (Belmont, California: Wadsworth, 1971), p. 6.

[12]Relations in Public (New York: Basic Books, 1971), p. 79.

[13]Since supportiveness is such a common function of leave-taking, we sometimes find ourselves in situations where it is excruciatingly difficult to be "unique" in taking leave. Take, for instance, the final moments of a cocktail party. Several guests are lined up ahead of you saying goodbye to the hostess; you hear each guest preceding you say something like: "Cynthia, we've had a great time. It was so much fun. Thanks a lot . . .". Now it's your turn. Because of the attending farewells preceding you, you may be forced to add emphasis which you may not feel, but which is demanded lest you be seen as unoriginal or unappreciative. Hence, you boom out with: "Cynthia . . . just fantastic! I can't remember when I had a better time. You and Zeke must come over to our house sometime." Later, as your wife questions the wisdom of your spontaneous invitation, you discover that you yourself aren't sure why you extended the invite in the first place!

[14]I Try to Behave Myself (New York: Fawcett, 1966), pp. 65-66. Our Italics.

[15](Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1969), p. 34. Those of us who attend professional conventions are probably familiar with the supportive leave-taking routine: "Boy, it's good to see you again, Clem. Why don't we have lunch sometime while we're here. What room are you in? I'll call you. . . ." The two conventioners are parted, never to see each other again, until of course, the following year, when they repeat the ritual. If, by chance, they meet when leaving the hotel, it may be necessary to develop an excuse for not having had that lunch, but generally, participants in such rituals do not expect a call or a lunch. They have simply used the occasion and the ploy to support their relationship and to make their next encounter equally pleasant.

[16]The practical functions of leave-taking will, naturally, vary from situation to situation. Any public speaking text worth its cover has a section or two on perorations, but, from a cursory look, none has improved much upon the four-fold functions of speech conclusions that Aristotle envisioned: (1) build emotion, (2) recapitulate main points, (3) render the audience well-disposed to the speaker, and (4) dramatize the worth of the speaker's case. Cf. Lane Cooper (trans.), The Rhetoric of Aristotle (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1932), p. 240.

Although the language is different, Aristotle's observations of "speaker to group" leave-taking do not appear to be radically different from our previous remarks about more "private" exiting. In both settings, the leaver has to exit on a highly supportive note and to get his "business" done at the same time. One recent text does, however, caution against staid supportiveness in public leave-taking: "A 'thank you' at the very end of a speech may detract from the central idea and an otherwise strong final impression. Indeed, any remarks of appreciation used as last sentences ought to be carefully considered before inclusion since they may destroy the focus of an otherwise effective conclusion." J. F. Wilson and C. C. Arnold, Public Speaking As A Liberal Art (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1964), p. 203.

[17]The "rules" of written leave-taking are seemingly endless as can be seen in any self-respecting letter writing text. One book devotes an entire appendix to "proper" complimentary closes for dozens of people--ranging from the Pope to General Wheeler. Cf. C. B. Williams and E. G. Griffin, Effective Business Communication (New York: Ronald Press, 1966), pp. 532-36.

[18]Variables such as sex, age, importance of the person's next appointment, and posture (standing vs. sitting) were controlled for. Other factors which were not controlled in this study, but which may modify leave-taking behavior are: the importance of the topic being discussed, adherence to a "punctuality norm", and numerous personality factors.

[19]A post-interview questionnaire was distributed to the subjects, asking them to describe their previous relationship with their interviewee. Subject's responses validated the high and low acquaintance conditions, but several students did not see major differences in status between themselves and the professor. When asked about such perceptions, subjects seem to be basing their judgments of status on the "friendly, non-threatening tone of the interview" rather than the ascribed status of Dr. or Professor. However, the signal lights (indicating five minutes had elapsed) were necessary in seventeen cases with different status pairs and only six times with same status pairs. Generally, then, there seemed to be a greater "felt difficulty" in taking leave of those with "higher status."

[20]In the high status condition, the title "Dr." was used in the introduction along with the professor's departmental affiliation. For the low status condition, the student's name and his year in school were given.

[21]Many of the verbal categories suggested here were initially hinted at in an open-ended survey of student responses to the question. "From your own experience, what would you say are the most common verbal and nonverbal methods by which people terminate conversations?" The 750 responses to this query were content analyzed. The results helped in the final development of the category system reported here.

[22]Many of the categories used in this portion of the study were initially validated by students in a graduate seminar in nonverbal communication. By means of systematic observations of social leave-taking, these students helped to document the "inclusiveness" of the category system presented here. The only category observed by the students and not included in this study concerned "voice volume changes." One coder, while viewing the subjects in this study, did note what he called "an apologetic tone" in many of the voice samples. However, the quality of our audio recordings prohibited any precise vocal analysis. Nevertheless, vocal variation may well be another important nonverbal concomitant of leave-taking.

[23]Reliability coefficients for the major body areas revealed a high reliability for "legs" (.97) and "posture and hands" (.93) but the head area alone was only .68. Further sub-analyses of the head area revealed satisfactory reliability for "eye contact" (.85) and "head nodding" (.77), but "smiling behavior" was only .56. We mention this as a cautionary note for other nonverbal researchers who, like us, may falsely assume that smiling behavior to a relatively easy behavior is code.

[24]K. V. Wilson, "A Distribution-Free Test of Analysis of Variance Hypotheses," Psychological Bulletin, 53 (1956) 96-101.

[25]Categories which co-occurred more than they occurred alone were: Buffing, Tentative, Appreciate, Internal Legitimizer, Superlatives, and Reference to Other.

[26]Since a co-occurrence could be composed of two, three, and four-way combinations of verbal categories, more detailed analyses were made of multiple occurrences. The most frequent double occurrences were:

1. Reinforcement/Buffing--e.g., "Yeah, well . . ." (10 times)
2. Tentative/Internal Legitimizer--e.g., "I think that's all my questions." (10 times)
3. Buffing/Appreciation--e.g., "Well, thanks for your time." (9 times)
4. Superlative/Appreciation--e.g., "I really appreciate the information you've given me." (9 times)

The most frequent triple occurrences were:

1. Reinforcement/Tentative/Internal Legitimizer--e.g., "Ok, I think that's all my questions." (9 times)
2. Buffing/Tentative/Internal Legitimizer--e.g., "Well, I think that's all I have for now." (6 times)

The most frequent quadruple occurrence was:

1. Reinforcement/Buffing/Tentative/Internal Legitimizer--e.g., "Yeah, well . . . I guess I'm finished with the questions I have." (7 times)

[27]Telephone conversations, for instance, probably reveal special communicative patterns precipitated by the lack of face-to-face contact. We might predict a preonderance of External Legitimizers to be used in phone calls since the lack of visual contact allows a multitude of unverifiable excuses to be used in terminating the conversation. Over the phone, verbalizations which serve to support the relationship of the two parties may be more profuse or more dramatically accented by vocal cues since such functions cannot be performed by other nonverbal cues. And, contrary to formal face-to-face contacts, the use of a terminator (or some variation thereof) seems to be universally sanctioned in telephone leave-taking.

Similar leave-taking variations may be found in cliques (e.g., the use of the peace sign), informal situations (more statements of Continuance and Welfare Concern), children (fewer Buffers, Tentatives, Superlatives, etc.), and periods of long-term inaccessability (more Terminators--and their nonverbal equivalent, waving).

[28]Attesting to the formal nature of these behaviors was the fact that when Handshakes did occur they occurred in situations where the parties were not acquainted or were of different status. Terminators were observed only when pairs were non-acquainted.

[29]Summary of this literature can be found in M. L. Knapp, Nonverbal Communication in Human Interaction (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1972), pp. 97-107.

[30]While most leave-taking seems to necessitate the display of some form of supportiveness, there are instances in which lack of support can be noted. For example, Handshakes and Reinforcement may communicate negative feelings as a result of nonverbal manipulations (e.g., sarcastic agreement). Hence, the behaviors we have described as being supportive can only be treated as such after encoder intent, decoder sensitivity, and other situational variables are fully considered.

Table 1

Rank Ordering of Leave-Taking Behaviors Across Conditions

| Rank | Verbal Variables | Mean | Rank | Nonverbal Variables | Mean |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Reinforcement | 3.05 | 1 | Breaking Eye Contact | 1.89 |
| 2 | Professional Inquiry | 1.30 | 2 | Left Positioning | 1.76 |
| 3 | Buffing | 1.22 | 3 | Forward Lean | 1.66 |
| 4 | Appreciation | 1.09 | 4 | Nodding Behavior | 1.55 |
| 5 | Internal Legitimizer | .75 | 5 | Major Leg Movements | 1.38 |
| 6 | Tentative | .71 | 6 | Smiling Behavior | 1.31 |
| 7 | External Legitimizer | .59 | 7 | Sweeping Hand Movements | 1.23 |
| 8 | Filling | .56 | 8 | Explosive Foot Movements | 1.19 |
| 9 | Superlatives | .37 | 9 | Leveraging | 1.17 |
| 10 | Reference to Other | .23 | 10 | Major Trunk Movements | 1.10 |
| 11 | Personal Inquiry | .13 | 11 | Handshake | 1.09 |
| 12 | Welfare Concern | .13 | 12 | Explosive Hand Contact | 1.02 |
| 13 | Continuance | .11 | | | |
| 14 | Terminating | .01 | | | |

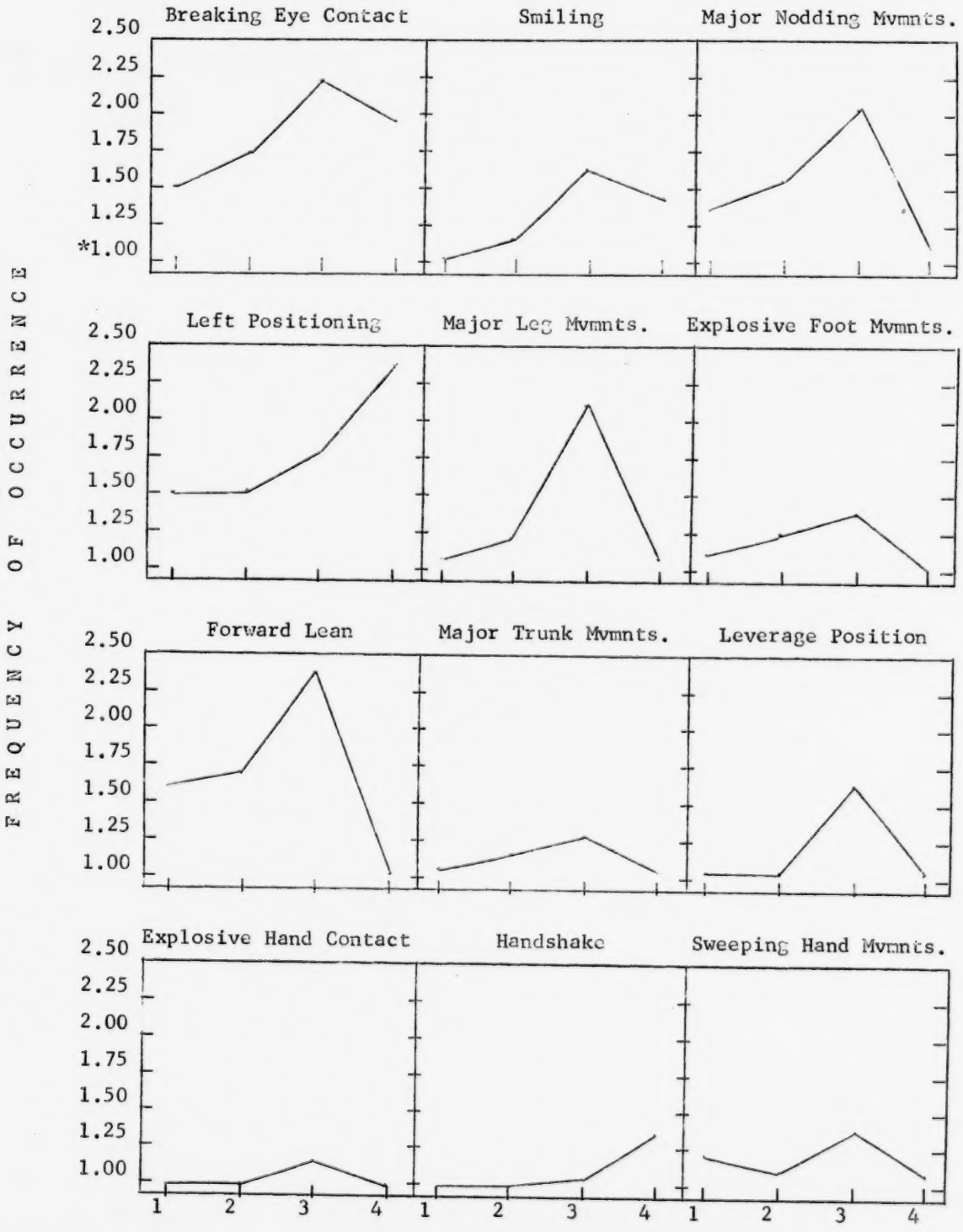
Table 2

Nonverbal Leave-Taking Variables Rank Ordered Across Time

| Variable | Period 1 | Period 2 | Period 3 | Period 4 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Breaking Eye Contact | 2.5 | 3.0 | 1.5 | 2.0 |
| Left Positioning | 2.5 | 4.0 | 5.0 | 1.0 |
| Forward Lean | 1.0 | 1.0 | 1.5 | 8.5 |
| Nodding Behavior | 4.0 | 2.0 | 4.0 | 6.5 |
| Major Leg Movements | 7.0 | 8.0 | 3.0 | 8.5 |
| Smiling Behavior | 8.0 | 6.0 | 7.0 | 3.0 |
| Sweeping Hand Movements | 5.0 | 7.0 | 8.0 | 5.0 |
| Explosive Foot Movements | 6.0 | 5.0 | 9.0 | 11.5 |
| Leveraging | 9.5 | 10.0 | 6.0 | 10.0 |
| Major Trunk Movements | 9.5 | 9.0 | 10.0 | 6.5 |
| Handshake | 11.5 | 11.5 | 12.0 | 4.0 |
| Explosive Hand Contact | 11.5 | 11.5 | 11.0 | 11.5 |

Figure 1

Frequency of Occurrence of Nonverbal Variables Across Time




*1.00 = Zero frequency

Table 3[26]

Most Frequent Verbal Co-occurrences in Leave-Taking

| Co-occurring Categories | Number of Co-occurrences* |
|---|---|
| Internal Legitimizer/Tentative | 37 |
| Reinforcement/Buffing | 26 |
| Buffing/Tentative | 24 |
| Reinforcement/Internal Legitimizer | 23 |
| Reinforcement/Tentative | 22 |
| Appreciation/Superlative | 22 |
| Buffing/Internal Legitimizer | 19 |
| Reinforcement/Appreciation | 18 |
| Appreciation/Buffing | 16 |
| Buffing/External Legitimizer | 12 |
| Reinforcement/Superlative | 11 |
| Appreciation/Personal Inquiry | 11 |

*Based on a total of 285 potential co-occurrences

Table 4

Major Communicative Functions of Leave-Taking
And Their Behavioral Correlates

| | Behaviors Capable of Signalling Inaccessability | Behaviors Capable of Signalling Supportiveness |
|---|---|---|
| Subtle | Major Leg Movements<br>Forward Lean<br>Hand Leveraging<br>Major Trunk Movements<br>Personal Inquiry<br>Filling<br>Professional Inquiry<br>Buffing<br>Tentative<br>Major Nodding Movements<br>Reinforcement<br>Appreciation<br>Welfare Concern<br>Superlative<br>Smiling Behavior<br>Breaking Eye Contact | Forward Lean<br>Filling<br>Professional Inquiry<br>Buffing<br>Major Nodding Movements<br>Reference to Other<br>Personal Inquiry<br>Continuance |
| Direct | Sweeping Hand Movements<br>Reference to Other<br>Left Positioning<br>Explosive Hand Contact<br>Explosive Foot Contact<br>External Legitimizer<br>Internal Legitimizer<br>Continuance<br>Terminator<br>Handshake | Superlative<br>External Legitimizer<br>Reinforcement<br>Smiling<br>Welfare Concern<br>Appreciation<br>Handshake |